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DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

for 1956



DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1956

To the Chairman and Members of the Devizes Rural District Council

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the state of the Public Health of the Devizes Rural District during the year 1956.

I wish to record my appreciation of the help and cordial co-operation received from the Council's Officers, particularly the Clerk to the Council and the Chief Public Health Inspector, during this year: such co-operation being the more welcome because I was a newcomer uninitiated in the ways of County District Council procedure. I also wish to thank the Chairman, the Committee Chairmen and Members of the Council who, knowing this latter fact, have at all times been ready to listen to, and to debate upon, my ideas and advice.

I have the honour to be
Your obedient servant,
KENNETH J. ADAMS,

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health

K. J. ADAMS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Univ. Lond.). Appointed February, 1956.)

Senior Public Health Inspector

G. E. WILLIAMS, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. (Also Surveyor and Water Engineer.)

Assistant Public Health Inspector

V. C. S. ROBEY, M.A.P.H.I. (Also Deputy Surveyor and Deputy Water Engineer.)

Additional Public Health Inspector

D. W. E. JESSETT.

Housing Inspector

E. C. BISHOP.

Rodent Operative

F. W. BARRETT (Part-time, being shared with Devizes Borough Council.)

Clerical Staff

W. H. POULTNEY.
G. W. MADDOX.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area in Acres ...	...	...	...	...	63,491
Population (Registrar General's Estimate) ...				...	17,360
Number of Inhabited Houses ...	...	...	...	...	3,975
Rateable Value ...	...	...	...	...	£98,220
Product of 1d. Rate ...	...	...	...	...	£312/11/7

VITAL STATISTICS

Births and Infantile Deaths

	Legitimate		Illegitimate		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Live Births ...	99	100	1	3	203
Still Births ...	—	1	—	—	1
Deaths under 1 year ...	3	—	—	—	3
Deaths under 4 weeks	1	—	—	—	1

Birth and Death Rates compared with Other Areas

(Births and Deaths per 1,000 population)

		Birth Rate	Death Rate
England and Wales	...	15.7	11.7
Wiltshire	...	17.41	9.77
Devizes Rural District	...	14.96	7.4

In calculating Birth and Death Rates, area comparability factors are issued by the Registrar General to "correct" irregularities in the age and sex structure of the population, and also to take into account any high mortality due to the presence of residential institutions.

There were 3 deaths among infants under one year of age to 203 live births in the area. This is too small a figure to calculate an accurate infantile mortality rate but it compares favourably with the national rate of 23.8 deaths in infants under one year of age per thousand live births, and the Wiltshire rate of 18.5.

CAUSES OF DEATH

		Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	1	—	1
Other forms of Tuberculosis ...	...	—	—	—
Syphilitic Diseases ...	...	1	—	1
Cancer and other Malignant Neoplasms	9	8	17	
Diabetes	...	—	1	1
Heart Diseases	...	75	67	142

		Male	Female	Total
Other Circulatory Diseases	...	6	5	11
Influenza	...	—	1	1
Pneumonia	...	5	7	12
Bronchitis	...	4	3	7
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	...	2	1	3
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	...	1	—	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	1	—	1
Nephritis and Nephrosis	...	3	1	4
Hyperplasia of Prostate	...	2	—	2
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	...	—	—	—
Congenital Malformations	...	—	1	1
Other Defined and Ill-Defined Diseases	...	8	11	19
Motor Vehicle Accidents	...	4	—	4
All Other Accidents	...	3	3	6
Suicide	...	3	1	4
Homicide and Operations of War	...	—	—	—
GRAND TOTALS	...	128	110	238

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

There were no deaths from communicable diseases during the year. Cases notified were as follows :—

Dysentery	...	...	21
Whooping Cough	...	...	19
Measles	...	...	9
Scarlet Fever	...	...	7
Tuberculosis	...	...	4

Diphtheria

There were no cases during the year. This is a direct result of immunisation against the disease. Diphtheria is still with us. For example, in 1955 sixteen cases (with two deaths) were notified in the County of London alone.

Immunisation was first pressed by the Ministry of Health in 1940 when an approved immunising agent was provided to Local Authorities free of cost. The situation has now been reached when the present generation of young mothers cannot picture the disease, and indeed many young doctors who have been taught upon cases in the fever hospitals as students are unfamiliar with its signs because they have never seen a case in recent years. How much more important it is today not to relax vigilance because of this. When cases occur it is quite possible for immunised contacts to carry Diphtheria bacilli in their throats with impunity to themselves but ready to infect the next unimmunised child.

Immunisation During 1956

Age Group	Under								Total under 15
		1	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	
Primary immunisation completed during 1956	Diphtheria	98	40	(— 14 —)		5	3	160	
	Whooping Cough	91	39	(— 8 —)		1	1	140	
Reinforcement injections given during 1956	Diphtheria	—	—	(— 11 —)		136	40	187	
	Whooping Cough	—	—	(— 4 —)		7	—	11	
Total immunised child population at 31st December 1956	Pre 1.1.52	—	—	—	—	—	209	427	636
	Post 1.1.52	30	122	118	136	133	840	553	1932

Smallpox

Smallpox Vaccination during 1956

Age Group	Under 1	1	2-4	5-14	15 or over
Vaccinations ...	92	10	3	2	5
Re-vaccinations	—	—	3	16	30

Bacillary Dysentery

A complaint was received in February from the Army Medical authorities that a soldier returning from leave spent at Stanton St. Bernard was unwell. Investigations in the village revealed that several adults and school children were suffering from similar symptoms and a preliminary diagnosis of Sonne Dysentery was confirmed by laboratory investigation.

Further investigations led to All Cannings where a few cases had occurred and contacts led to an epidemic of the disease at Devizes Southbroom Junior School being discovered.

As the first cases occurring in families were usually school children, it appeared likely that poor school hygiene was the disseminator of the infection.

The outbreak was part of a nation-wide epidemic of Sonne Dysentery, the number of notifications in England and Wales breaking all records for previous years. That the disease did not spread to other schools in the area is due to the public spirited action of mothers who, knowing their children to be carriers, kept them at home for long periods, sometimes with great hardship to the child.

It has been proved conclusively that the disease is transferred by contact and that the stools of cases are likely to be infectious for a matter of weeks after symptoms of diarrhoea have abated. Such cases are then known as carriers. It has also been proved in the laboratory that the infective bacteria pass through toilet paper; thus pull chains and door handles of closets are easily contaminated. Therefore, the first line of defence is adequate washing facilities, and it is on this score that the hygiene of many of our local schools and public buildings fall short. This does not altogether explain the prevalence of the disease today, as these washing facilities have existed for many years and have, until recently, been accepted as socially adequate. The real reason for the increase in notifications is likely to be that the disease has changed its character over the years, even as the severity of Scarlet Fever has changed. Dysentery has become a disease of contact rather than a food-borne infection; there is a shift of prevalence from Rural to Urban areas; the cases occur mostly in Primary schools where they formally occurred in closed communities.

Notifications of Dysentery, England and Wales

1937	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
4,119	15,665	19,540	33,976	41,414	53,006

Approximately 95% of the notified cases of bacillary dysentery are due to Sonne bacillus.

Whooping Cough

Nineteen cases of this disease were notified. This continues to be the scourge of the young child and so infectious is the cough that two-thirds of susceptible children are attacked before they even enter school. The disease carries a small mortality, especially for children under two years of age.

Yet, with foresight, much of the suffering is quite unnecessary. Whooping Cough Vaccine has always been available under the National Health Service, but in early days fell into disrepute because the potency of the vaccine was so variable. Of recent years a better vaccine has been manufactured and from the beginning of 1956 the Wiltshire County Council has offered this, combined with Diphtheria prophylactic, free of charge at all Child Welfare Clinics and at Immunising sessions. Family doctors also have supplies. The vaccine is about 80% effective in preventing the disease and in the remaining 20% of cases will render an attack less severe.

Tuberculosis

Four new pulmonary cases were diagnosed during the year. Vaccination against Tuberculosis is practised in many areas as a routine measure and is offered subject to parental consent to

13-year-old children who have not had the disease. It is hoped that such routine protection will shortly be made available here.

Poliomyelitis

No case of this disease occurred. Certain age groups of children were vaccinated against the infection.

There are two main criteria for the success of a new vaccine. The first is that it should be safe and the second that it should be effective. In my opinion the present "Salk" poliomyelitis vaccine is undoubtedly safe but its efficiency has yet to be conclusively proved, and the number and time spacing of injections is only likely to be standardised in the light of experience. No complaints were received in this area about reactions from the vaccine and indeed it is my opinion that there is even less local reaction at the injection site than in the case of the more familiar diphtheria injection.

Brucellosis

Under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949, it is an offence to sell milk infected with a disease communicable to man. Such an infection may be caused by the bacteria *Brucella abortus*. The organism causes *Abortus* Fever in cattle and the best method at present to eradicate the disease from a herd is by the inoculation of calves with an attenuated *Brucella* vaccine (strain 19). This decreases the proportion of animals which excrete *Brucella* in their milk.

The only satisfactory method to obtain safe milk from an infected herd is by pasteurisation. Tuberculin Tested milk is not necessarily safe from infection by these organisms and a dairy retailing infected milk may have to face legal actions brought about by customers for damage sustained to their health.

Brucellosis in children is characterised by fever, joint pain, chronic abdominal pain and headache. Its diverse symptoms and intermittent character make diagnosis very difficult and there is no doubt that many children are labelled as being just off colour for six months or so and not taken to their doctors, when in reality they are suffering from this disease. Unfortunately, Brucellosis is not notifiable although help from family doctors in this respect would be much appreciated by the Health Department.

Routine milk sampling often yields a clue to infected herds but the actual isolation of the bacteria which is necessary to prove that the milk is infected is a difficult task. It necessitates the inoculation of guinea pigs and a result is not available for six weeks. By this time the particular cow may have ceased to excrete the organism and a series of positive results or a local clinical case likely to have consumed the suspect milk is necessary evidence before formal action can be taken.

In August, I was informed by the County Medical Officer that a sample of milk from a local school contained live Brucella organisms. Investigation of the supply revealed positive tests from one herd and this milk was pasteurised forthwith. Both the dairyman and farmer concerned acted with commendable promptitude in this case as these measures were to the financial disadvantage of both parties and temporarily left the dairyman without a regular milk supply. Subsequently, live Brucella bacteria were isolated from many samples of this milk and it continues to be sent for pasteurisation.

ICE CREAM

The Food and Drugs Act, 1955, Section 23, provides that it is an offence to sell ice cream likely to cause communicable disease. The following is a list of diseases to which this applies :—

- Typhoid and Paratyphoid
- Dysentery
- Diphtheria
- Scarlet Fever
- Acute Inflammation of the Throat
- Gastro Enteritis
- Undulant Fever (Brucellosis)

The Act does not lay down a standard of cleanliness for ice cream. Because of this a conference of local County District Councils was held at Trowbridge on 24th September to arrange that information obtained from sampling ice cream should be pooled. It was also decided that the Minister of Food should be prevailed upon to introduce a compulsory standard of cleanliness if sampling results showed a need for this. Ice cream has been sampled in this district since the conference and results are reported upon by the Senior Public Health Inspector.

Report of the Senior Public Health Inspector 1956

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Report for the Year, 1956.

The Report contains some particulars of my duties as Water Engineer and Surveyor where these have a direct bearing on public health matters.

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Staff of the Department for the efficient and conscientious way in which they have carried out their duties and the Council for their continued appreciation.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

G. E. WILLIAMS,

Senior Public Health Inspector.

HOUSING

Slum Clearance

Following the compilation of a schedule of properties for inclusion in the Council's Five-Year Programme, and its submission to and approval by the Minister of Housing and Local Government, the Council decided to appoint a Sub-Committee of the Public Health and Housing Committee for the purpose of inspecting these properties and deciding on the action to be taken. Owing to the impossibility of re-surveying all houses in the district, the comprehensive survey carried out in 1946/47 was used as the basis of the schedule for the Five-Year Slum Clearance Programme. A few of the houses included in Category 5 (i.e., ripe for demolition) under the Rural Housing Survey had been improved to the extent of lifting them into Category 4 or 3, but by far the greater number had deteriorated further between 1947 and 1957.

The following table shows the result of the recommendations of your Officers and the findings of the Public Health and Housing Committee.

Analysis of Slum Clearance Programme

Recommended by Officers

Total number of Houses on Programme in 1955	197
Add: Heath Knapp Cottage, Etchilhampton ...	1
	—
	198
<i>Less:</i> 9 Cottages, Nursteed, now taken over by Devizes Borough Council, and 70 properties where action was previously taken (45 under Section 25 and 25 under Section 11) ...	79
	—

Number of Properties remaining where action suggested 119 — 119

Action recommended on remaining 119 Properties :—

For Section 25 action ...	...	...	29
For Section 11 action ...	...	...	90

Action Resolved by Council

For Section 25 action ...	...	...	...	...	Nil
For Section 11 action ...	...	...	...	...	52
For Deferred Action by Section 11 on demise of Aged Owner or Occupier or when property becomes vacant					15
To be purchased by Council ...	...	...	...	...	2
Properties included in Programme but have since been made reasonably fit as result of Grant or otherwise ...					4
					—
				TOTAL ...	73
					—

Note—In addition to the 4 properties which have been made fit, there are about ten properties which have had minor repairs and improvements carried out and the Owners have suggested to the Council's Housing Inspection Sub-Committee that they would be prepared to do further repair work.

Also, 6 dwellings known as The Almshouses, Bromham, may be the subject of Closing Orders if the proposed Improvement Scheme for them is not carried out. This property has been included in the figure below.

Number of Properties where Council resolved No Action
(119, less 73) 46

It will be seen that there are quite substantial differences of opinion between your Officers and the Committee. In these matters the views of the elected representatives must, of course, prevail. It may be nevertheless interesting to consider some of the reasons as to how these differences arise. In the first place your Officers have undergone quite extensive training in the legislative

and technical aspects of slum clearance work. They have also considerable opportunities, not readily available to the elected representatives, of knowing the intentions of the supreme legislature in these matters — opportunities to read and study the circulars and advice of the appropriate Government department, to read articles in technical journals by acknowledged experts, to attend meetings of professional associations and conferences, etc.

Apart from the technical and legislative aspects of slum clearance, and the repair and improvement of houses, if action is to be effective and continuous the reasons and motives for taking any action at all must be properly understood. In this connection I quote from a paper given at the Conference of the Royal Society of Health by F. Collin Brown, C.B.E., F.R.I.B.A., M.T.P.I., F.R.S.H., Chief Housing and Planning Inspector, Ministry of Housing and Local Government :

“ The objective must also embrace the motives behind the operations of demolishing old and erecting new buildings. What we do is only half the story, needing for its completion the record of why we do it. The external activity is the easier to describe and to carry out, but the inner compulsions, the motivations behind the activity, though less readily discernible, are a no less important part. The root motive is to be found in a concern the one for the other, and this stems from acknowledgement of the sacredness of the individual, and from acceptance of the family as the true basis of Christian living. Slum clearance and replacement housing is a national need, and it is one of the assets of what we call our Western way of life that when a need is made known there is a widespread readiness to share in seeking to meet it. I would therefore state the objective as being a crusade to help people to achieve a full life by the provision of good homes in a pleasing environment.”

New Housing

The Council erected a record number of houses during the year. This was mainly accounted for by the relatively large and pleasing estate at Ryelease, Potterne. No sites for building future houses were acquired. It is quite clear that the building of future Council houses is going to be retarded by reason of the Council not having the necessary land on which to build. The provision in the near future of a piped water supply throughout the district and sewerage schemes in several parishes will considerably facilitate the selection, if not the acquisition, of sites, and particularly small sites for in-filling in villages. Looking to the future it appears that the building programme will slow down very considerably for the next two or three years, after which there may well be a revival.

Improvement Grants

The Council has adopted a liberal policy in regard to improvement grants and is undoubtedly administering this work as the legislature intended.

Improvement grants were made in respect of 22 houses during the year at a cost in grants made of £7,020. Extensive improvement and modernisation was carried out to 28 houses. The average cost per dwelling improved was £1,141. I understand that this average cost is easily the highest in the county. The main reason for this appears to be the high standard of the improvements and work insisted on by your Officers. Thus the Council can rest assured that the money which they have distributed in grants has provided improvements of a radical and enduring nature.

Housing Acts, 1936-1954

The following is a copy of a return made to the County Medical Officer of Health respecting housing matters:—

Total number of permanent dwellings in district	...	3,975
Total number of permanent dwellings owned by local authority	...	811
Number of temporary dwellings occupied	...	—
Number of houses unfit for human habitation within the meaning of Section 9, Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, and suitable for action under Section 11 or Section 25, Housing Act, 1936	...	138

Action during Year

1. Number of Houses in Clearance Areas for which		
(a) Clearance Orders have been made	...	Nil
(b) Compulsory Purchase Orders made	...	Nil
(c) Purchased by agreement	...	Nil
2. Number of Houses in Clearance Areas still to be made	...	not anticipated
3. Number of Houses in Clearance Areas which have been patched for temporary accommodation under Section 2, Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954	...	Nil
4. Number of Houses demolished under Section 25, Housing Act, 1936	...	2
5. Number of Houses demolished under Section 11, Housing Act, 1936	...	12
6. Number of Temporary Dwellings demolished	...	—
7. Number of Houses closed as a result of Closing Orders or Undertakings by Owners	...	9
8. Number of Unfit Houses occupied under licence	...	20
9. Number of houses overcrowded	...	Not known

10.	Number of Houses made Fit during Year					
	(a) Informal Action	...	...	...	...	96
	(b) Statutory Action	...	...	...	...	Nil
11.	Estimated Number of Houses required					
	(a) To replace houses scheduled for demolition	...	...	...	...	47
	(b) To abate overcrowding	...	...	...	...	—
	(c) For other purposes	...	...	...	...	83
12.	Number of applications for Council Houses (as at 30th September)	...	...	...	...	305
13.	Number of Council Houses sold during Year	...	...	...	...	3
	Houses erected by Local Authority during year					
	(a) For Slum Clearance purposes	...	...	...	...	10
	(b) For other purposes	...	...	...	...	68
	Houses erected by private enterprise	...	...	...	...	11
	Houses in course of erection					
	(a) By Local Authority for Slum Clearance	...	...	...	...	14
	(b) By Local Authority for other purposes	...	...	...	...	Nil
	(c) By private enterprise for other purposes	...	...	...	...	6

Improvement Grants made under the Housing Acts, 1949-54

22 applications were received involving 25 houses.

19 applications were approved involving 22 houses.

1 application involving 1 house was rejected.

2 applications involving 2 houses were withdrawn.

Number of houses improved as result of grants ... 28

Number of grants made during period 1/1/56 to 31/12/56 21

Cost of grants made £7,020

Number of houses improved including new houses brought into use by conversion *28

(* of which 22 were for grants approved in 1955)

Number of applications in respect of owner occupiers ... 10

Average cost per dwellings approved £1,141

Average Rent fixed £80/10/0

Average amount of grant payable by local authority ... 50%

WATER SUPPLY

With the existing water schemes and those under construction, it is estimated that a public water supply will be available to about 97% of the population early in 1957. The mains network, storage capacity and plant of the Undertaking will, on the completion of these works, be in a satisfactory state. The only unsatisfactory features are the inadequacy of the source at Great Cheverell and the absence of a public water supply in a part of West Lavington. The Council have initiated measures to solve these two difficulties by the acquisition of the War Department Boreholes at the

V.I.S.T.R.E. Camp, Erlestoke, the building of a new reservoir on Pear Tree Hill, Great Cheverell, and the laying of mains in the parts of West Lavington not already served. Unfortunately, very little progress was made in regard to this scheme during 1956 owing to difficulties in settling matters of detail relating to the V.I.S.T.R.E. land and boreholes.

TABLE I

The amount of water supplied in 1956 from Great Cheverell, Erlestoke, Devizes Borough and Calne and Chippenham R.D.C. sources, expressed in thousands of gallons per month:—

	Great Chev'll	Fair-way	Nur-steed	Round-way	Brickley Lane	North Eastn.	North Westn.	Erlestoke	TOTAL
Jan.	2,596	1,142	10	19	—	—	2,782	101	6,650
Feb.	1,687	1,727	9	18	31*	—	3,243	114	6,829
Mar.	1,849	2,106	15	22	14	—	3,362	115	7,483
Apr.	2,559	1,770	12	18	12	—	3,302	114	7,787
May	2,779	1,838	16	19	14	—	3,571	126	8,363
June	2,629	1,922	12	17	15	—	3,133	121	7,849
July	3,038	2,017	13	21	17	—	3,684	118	8,908
Aug.	2,542	1,910	7	20	14	—	3,279	119	7,891
Sept.	2,556	1,889	8	16	15	—	3,145	122	7,751
Oct.	2,677	1,863	—	—	—	211	3,086	105	7,942
Nov.	2,547	1,902	13*	36*	27*	200	3,057	117	7,899
Dec.	2,693	1,859	3	26	—	269	2,977	120	7,947
	30,152	21,945	118	232	159	680	38,621	1,392	93,299

* Two months' consumption.

		1956	1955
Supplied from Great Cheverell			
Borehole		30,152,800 (32.3%)	27,938,200
Supplied from Devizes Borough			
(a) North-Eastern Scheme		680,125 (0.7%)	—
(b) Other Schemes ...		22,453,980 (24.1%)	24,278,120
Supplied from Calne and Chippenham R.D.C.		38,621,000 (41.4%)	22,363,000
Supplied from Erlestoke Source		1,391,700 (1.5%)	1,212,400
		93,299,605	75,791,720

The total shows an increase of 17,507,885 gallons over the amount for 1955, or approximately 23%.

TABLE II
The availability of public piped water supplies

PARISH	Details of Connections				Estimated Population Supplied	Estimated Total Population
	Domestic	Pt. Dom Pt. Tde.	Trade	Halls etc.		
GREAT CHEVERELL & NORTH-WESTERN SYSTEMS :						
Great Cheverell ...	101	11	8	1	384	384
Bromham ...	301	45	33	3	1,366	1,631
Market Lavington ...	299	30	24	2	1,260	1,314
Marston ...	28	10	2	—	144	144
Potterne ...	278	30	21	2	1,185	1,208
Poulshot ...	69	15	12	1	338	338
Rowde ...	184	21	21	1	790	902
Seend ...	264	43	48	—	946	946
Worton ...	101	12	6	2	358	358
*Easterton ...	34	1	7	—	125	467
*Little Cheverell ...	18	5	—	1	84	190
*West Lavington ...	84	4	1	—	307	1,034
*Part only of these parishes is supplied						
	1,761	227	183	13	7,287	8,916
NORTH-EASTERN SYSTEM :						
All Cannings ...	61	6	1	1	251	479
Bishops Cannings ...	52	3	3	—	215	795
Stanton St. Bernard	21	—	1	2	84	225
	134	9	5	3	550	1,499
ERLESTOKE SYSTEM :						
Erlestoke ...	35	—	1	—	125	249
MAIN EXTENSIONS FROM BOROUGH OF DEVIZES—						
PARISH OF ROUNDWAY :						
Roundway Village System ...	16	1	2	—	60	70
Nursteed System ...	13	4	—	—	60	60
Fairway System ...	18	1	—	—	67	67
Brickley Lane System	10	—	—	—	35	35
	57	6	2	—	222	232
TOTAL ...	1,987	242	191	16	8,134	10,896

TABLE III

The following is the number of new connections made to the water systems:—

	Great Cheverell and North-Western Systems	North- Eastern System	Roundway Village System	Fairway System
Domestic ...	93	134	1	1
Part Domestic and Part Trade ...	10	9	—	—
Trade only ...	30	5	1	—
Halls, etc. ...	—	3	—	—
TOTAL ...	133	151	2	1

TABLE IV

Results of Bacteriological Examination of Public Water Supplies

Date	Before Chlorination	After Chlorination
GREAT CHEVERELL SYSTEM		
9.1.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
9.2.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
26.3.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
9.4.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
8.8.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
10.9.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
24.9.56 ...	Satisfactory	—
2.10.56 ...	Satisfactory	—
24.10.56 ...	Satisfactory	—
22.11.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
NORTH-WESTERN SYSTEM		
9.1.56 ...	—	Fair
27.1.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
1.11.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
22.11.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
18.12.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
NORTH-EASTERN SYSTEM		
22.11.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
3.12.56 ...	—	Fair
3.12.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
18.12.56 ...	—	Fair
18.12.56 ...	—	Satisfactory
ERLESTOKE SYSTEM		
9.1.56 ...	Satisfactory	Fair
9.2.56 ...	Satisfactory	Fair
26.3.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
9.4.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
23.4.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
8.8.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
5.9.56 ...	Fair	Satisfactory
26.9.56 ...	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

TABLE V
Water consumption on certain Council House Estates

Estate	No. of Houses	Estimated Population	Annual Consumption	Average Consumption per Head per Day
Chirton ...	16	56	350,430 gallons	17.15 gallons
Etchilhampton	8	28	163,060 gallons	15.96 gallons
TOTAL ...	24	84	513,490 gallons	16.75 gallons

The Great Cheverell and North-Western Systems — Consumption Statistics

1. <i>Total number of premises supplied</i> ...	2,184
2. <i>Total number of metered connections</i> ...	410
3. <i>Total number of domestic connections</i> ...	1,761
4. <i>Total number of other connections, e.g., Halls, etc.</i>	13
5. <i>Total overall consumption</i>	90,718,800 gallons
6. <i>Total metered consumption</i>	36,287,520 gallons
7. <i>Estimated total domestic consumption</i> ...	60,227,480 gallons
8. <i>Estimated average domestic consumption per head of the population per diem</i>	22.44 gallons
9. <i>Estimated average overall consumption per head of the population per diem</i>	33.80 gallons

It should be noted that Nos. 7-9 above are estimated figures. It is not possible to give precise figures as the water which is recorded by most service meters, e.g., farms, is used for both domestic and non-domestic purposes. Again, an estimate of the population (3.5 persons per house) is used in arriving at the above figures as a physical count is not practicable. No adjustment has been made for the waste factor. Notwithstanding these assumptions the figures may be taken as reasonably reliable.

The following inferences may be drawn from a study of the preceding tables and statistics :—

1. 96.6% of the population of those parishes which have had mains water throughout the Parish since 1937 now enjoy a public water supply. It will probably never be economically possible to obtain a 100% connection owing to the distance of a number of properties from the water mains and to the fact that some properties are above the hydraulic gradient.

2. The domestic consumption per head of the population per day, viz., 22.44 gallons, shows a slight increase compared with the figure for 1955 and an increase of 41% compared with the figure arrived at for 1950.

3. The estimated average domestic consumption per head of the population per day on the small Council house estate systems, shown in Table V, is 16.75 gallons, compared with 22.44 gallons on the Great Cheverell and North-Western Systems. The apparent relatively excessive consumption on the Great Cheverell and North-Western Systems, to which are connected numerous houses having no water closets or baths, indicates that water is being wasted through undetected leakages, misuse or undue consumption. In the absence of a properly organised system of waste detection and the records that go with it, it is not possible to give a more detailed analysis of the causes of the increase and the remedies therefor. I hope to be able to give greater attention to this aspect of the work when the spate of applications for connection to the new Water Supply Schemes has been dealt with.

4. The figure of 22.44 gallons per head per day is only 10% below the design figure of 25 gallons per head per day used for your post-war Water Schemes.

General Observations

If a Local Authority is to run its water undertaking on sound principles and to have a clear view of the present and future policy it must have, among other things, accurate statistics relating to yield of sources, consumption, loss through wastage, assessments of future requirements and information of the like nature.

During the year under review considerable construction work has been in progress on new schemes, one of which (the North-Eastern Scheme) came into operation for only three months of the current year. The full impact of the scheme completed in 1955 is not yet manifest and it appears that the South-Eastern Scheme will not be in operation until mid-1957. Thus, while water schemes are in the state of flux which obtained in 1956, it is not possible to give a comprehensive review of the water supply position for the District, and indeed it will not be possible to do so until about 1958.

No useful experience was gained of the effect of supplying water for horticultural irrigation in the Bromham area owing to the heavy rainfall during the spring and summer, which made irrigation unnecessary.

SEWERAGE

The Council are responsible for :—

Approximately 15 miles of public piped sewer.

Approximately 5 miles of public sewer ditch.

Several miles of private sewer and drains on Council house estates.

24 Sewage works.

Excellent progress was made in regard to the provision of public sewerage schemes and the position at the end of the year was as follows :—

Easterton, Market Lavington and West Lavington

Construction commenced on Stage I of this Scheme in the early part of the year.

Rowde

This Scheme was practically completed but, unfortunately, it was not possible to put it into operation owing to the failure of the pump manufacturers to redeem their promise in regard to delivery.

Potterne

Stage II of this Scheme was completed.

Seend

The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has approved this Scheme including the Factory Row and Bell Hill area.

Urchfont

The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has approved the Council's revised Scheme in principle.

Stanton St. Bernard and Wedhampton

The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has approved the Council's Schemes.

Etchilhampton

An Inspector of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government held a local investigation into the Council's proposals.

Bromham

The Council approved a Scheme for a portion of this Parish.

Great Cheverell and Little Cheverell

The Council's consultants have been instructed to prepare a scheme for these Parishes.

The Council have deviated considerably from the list of sewerage scheme priorities recommended and adopted by the Council in September, 1946. These were as follows:—

1. Market Lavington
2. Potterne
3. Poulshot, Worton and Marston
4. Great Cheverell
5. West Lavington
6. Rowde
7. Easterton
8. Seend
9. Urchfont
10. Wedhampton

It will be seen that Poulshot, Worton and Marston ranked third in the list of priorities. No scheme other than the barest outline scheme, prepared in 1946, has materialised for these three Parishes where individual septic tanks are difficult owing to the absence of fall and the impervious nature of the subsoil. A great deal of nuisance arises through the extensive fouling of ditches in

these Parishes and general inconvenience to inhabitants caused through the absence of a sewerage scheme. It is recommended that the Council should instruct their Engineers to prepare schemes for these Parishes.

Slaughterhouses

FOOD INSPECTION

For the whole of the year, three private licensed slaughterhouses have been in continuous operation, one of which is conducted by a butcher who supplies a number of other butchers in the surrounding district. All the premises have been visited weekly and although the structural and inherent defects leave much to be desired in the two smaller slaughterhouses the general standard of cleanliness and good hygiene practices were of the highest order.

Meat Inspection

The number of carcases inspected and condemnations were as follows:—

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	650	176	332	826	752
Number inspected ...	650	176	332	826	752
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS AND CYSTICERCOSIS :					
Whole carcases condemned	1	—	1	2	7
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	21	22	—	—	2
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticercosis	3.38%	12.5%	.033%	.024%	1.2%
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY :					
Whole carcases condemned	3	4	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	24	13	1	—	6
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...	4.15%	.96%	.033%	—	.8%
CYSTICERCOSIS :					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	—	—	—	—	—
Generally and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

The health and condition of animals slaughtered by butchers in this district is high compared with that of many areas. This statement is borne out by the relatively low percentage of meat condemned as unfit for human consumption. Tuberculosis was at one time very prevalent among cattle, and in the nineteen thirties it was generally accepted that 40% of cows were suffering from some degree of tuberculosis. It is a matter for congratulation that by the combined efforts of the Government, Local Authorities and farmers, the incidence of the disease is being rapidly reduced to small proportions.

The numbers of animals killed for human consumption in this area are, of course, far too small to draw any general conclusions, but they appear to support the general trend, i.e., that the incidence of tuberculosis among cows is decreasing.

Disposal of Condemned Food

No foodstuff has been condemned during the year but arrangements are in force whereby, should the occasion arise, any condemned food is removed by the Council's refuse vehicles and disposed of by burial. All condemned meat at the slaughterhouses is first stained and then removed by a hide and skin company to Bristol for manufacture into fertilisers.

FOOD PREMISES

There are now more than 100 food premises of all kinds in the Council's district and an endeavour has been made to carry out at least one inspection of each of the premises although many have received a number of visits. The Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955, the main provisions of which came into force on 1st January, 1956, have set a higher standard of hygiene than could hitherto be required. Many premises were found to fall short of the new requirements especially the provision of hand washing facilities, hot water supply, food storage and food handling requirements and also as regards the maintenance of internal structures. These premises have now complied or are in the process of complying with the new regulations as a result of informal action by the Council's Officers, who also, on many occasions, are required to act in an advisory capacity in the replanning of badly designed old food premises.

It is pleasing to note the increase in the number of shops installing deep-freeze cabinets for the storage and sale of frozen foods and a number of proprietors have taken your Officers' advice and have purchased refrigerators.

Number and Types of Food Premises

General Retail Food Shops	Public Houses	Butchers' Shops	Bake- houses	Fried Fish Shops	Hospitals, School Kitchens, Institutions	Restaurants and Cafes
43	41	5	7	2	21	3
Total ... 122						

Three premises are registered for the manufacture of sausages under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955.

ICE CREAM

There are 33 registered vendors of ice cream in the district and in addition a number of travelling vans call at most villages during the summer months and especially at week-ends. All ice cream sold in the district is now pre-packed and none is manufactured in the district. All the premises have been inspected during the year, a total of 41 visits being made, and excepting minor infringements which have been dealt with informally under the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955, they have generally been found to be satisfactory.

The sampling of ice cream was instituted during the latter part of the year and the results are as follows :—

PROVISIONAL GRADES OF CLEANLINESS					
	I	II	III	IV	Total
Manufacturer A ...	2	3	—	—	5
Manufacturer B ...	7	1	—	—	8
Manufacturer C ...	8	4	—	—	12
TOTAL ...					25

The Public Health Laboratory Service suggests that 50% of a vendor's samples shall fall into Grade I, 80% into Grade I or II, no more than 20% into Grade III and none into Grade IV. On this basis it will be seen that ice cream supplied in the area can be regarded as satisfactory.

MILK SUPPLIES

The milk supply throughout the district has been generally satisfactory. The majority of milk sold is either Pasteurised or Tuberculin Tested, there being only three dairymen selling un-designated milk and these will be compelled to sell only designated

milk from 1st April, 1957, when the Milk (Special Designations) (Specified Areas) Order, 1957, comes into force. This Order will embrace the whole of Wiltshire and it is hoped will bring a steady rise in the standard of purity of milk sold to the public.

A number of villages are served by Distributors holding designated licences from neighbouring authorities and there are three Producer/Retailers of Tuberculin Tested milk who are licensed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Routine sampling of both raw and heat-treated milk has been carried on throughout the year whilst the County Public Health Inspector has sampled regularly all school milk.

The following are the details of registrations and licences in force :—

Distributors and Dairies	12
Dealers licensed to sell Tuberculin Tested milk ...	3
Dealers licensed to sell Pasteurised milk ...	6
Supplementary licenses to sell Tuberculin Tested milk ...	6
Supplementary licenses to sell Pasteurised milk ...	6

Details and Results of Sampling

	Passed	Failed	Total
Methylene Blue Test (for keeping quality)			
Non-designated milk	9	5	14
Tuberculin Tested milk	34	4	38
Phosphatase Test (for efficient pasteurisation)			
	20	1	21
Biological Test (for presence of tubercle bacilli)			
Non-designated milk	13	0	13
Designated milk	31	0	31

Milk and Dairies

Routine visits have been paid to all dairies in the district and a small number of minor infringements were corrected by informal action.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

Refuse is collected fortnightly with the exception of the military establishments in the area where it is collected twice per

week. The re-organised collection of refuse worked smoothly and without complaint. A few complaints were, however, received from people who found difficulty in carrying their bins to the roadside and who considered that the Council ought to inaugurate a "rear of premises" collection. It would, of course, be possible to organise the collection of refuse from the rear of premises, but I estimate that it would approximately double the cost. The occupiers of some of the isolated premises which are a long distance from the public highway and from which collection is not made, also complained that they had to pay rates which included an element for refuse collection though they did not in fact enjoy this service.

The difficulties encountered in regard to the disposal of refuse were dealt with at length in my Report for 1955. These continued during the current year. The answer to these difficulties lies in the provision of proper mechanised aids at the refuse tip.

The total cost of collection and disposal of refuse for the year ended 31st March, 1956, was £3,303 19s. 7d. and the net cost after deducting income received (£643 17s. 2d.) was £2,660 2s. 5d. The approximate cost of the service per head of the population served was 3s. 4d.

RODENT CONTROL

The tabular form of report required annually by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, which accompanies these comments, shows the amount of work carried out in connection with this duty.

The refuse tip and sewer ditches, etc., of the Council have received quite a lot of attention. This is very necessary to prevent heavy infestation.

I am sure that the daily work of the conscientious and competent Rodent Operative, Mr. Barrett, is materially helping to keep the rat menace in check and his work is appreciated by the general public.

The practice of sharing the services of the Rodent Operative with the Devizes Borough Council continues to work smoothly.

		Type of Property					
		(1) Local Auth- ority	(2) Dwelling Houses (inc. Council Houses)	(3) All Other (inc. Business Prem- ises)	(4) Total of Cols. (1), (2) & (3)	(5) Agri- cultural	
I.	Number of properties in Local Authority's District		6	2,953	244	3,203	845
II.	Number of properties inspected as result of : (a) Notification ...	—	9	3	12	—	
	(b) Survey under the Act	6	1,454	131	1,591	107	
	(c) Otherwise (e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose) ...	—	—	—	—	—	
III.	Total Inspections carried out — including re-inspections				Figures not readily available		
IV.	Number of properties inspected (in Sec. II) which were found to be infested by : (a) Rats — Major ... Minor ... (b) Mice — Major ... Minor ...	4 2	27 176	40 27	71 205	9 9	
V.	Number of infested properties (in Sec. IV) treated by the Local Authority	6	206	70	282	18	
VI.	Total treatments carried out — including re-treatments				Figures not readily available		
VII.	Number of notices served under Sec. 4 of the Act : (a) Treatment (b) Structural Work (i.e., Proofing) ...	—	—	—	—	—	
VIII.	Number of cases in which default action was taken following the issue of a notice under Sec. 4 of the Act ...	—	—	—	—	—	
IX.	Legal Proceedings ...	—	—	—	—	—	
X	Number of "Block" control schemes carried out				Total 57		

FACTORIES

There are 53 factories in the district. Most of these have been visited at regular intervals and have generally been found to give no cause for complaint.

It has not been found necessary to refer any defects to H.M. Inspector, nor has H.M. Inspector referred to this Council any defects which it is their duty to remedy.

SHOPS

The greater number of shops in the district are of the general "village shop" type and are staffed mostly by the family residing on the premises. These family concerns are usually found to be most co-operative in complying with the requirements of the Shops Act and the small number of infringements have received prompt attention after verbal intimation.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS

Licences were in force in respect of five sites. Individual licences were granted in respect of twenty moveable dwellings.

COMPLAINTS

The following Table shows the position in regard to complaints made to your Officers either verbally or by correspondence.

Type of Complaint	Number	Remedied	Out-standing	No Action necessary
Housing (excluding Council Houses)	26	23	3	—
Overcrowding	4	4	—	—
Insanitary Houses	5	5	—	—
Sewerage	10	8	—	2
Drainage	48	42	4	2
River Pollution	1	1	—	—
Water Supply	4	4	—	—
Refuse	12	11	—	1
Keeping of Animals	6	5	—	1
Fly Infestation	4	3	—	1
Rodent Infestation	4	4	—	—
Footpaths	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	10	9	—	1
TOTALS ...	134	119	7	8

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT AND BUILDING BYELAWS

211 plans were submitted for approval, 123 of which required approval under the Town and Country Planning Act.

The explanation of the complicated procedures in regard to the submission of plans and applications, etc., made heavy inroads into the time of your Officers. In many cases applicants were not willing to engage professional assistance from persons who are acquainted with the complexities of the law governing these matters; this means that your Officers have to fulfil that role.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS

Housing	...	...	...	...	...	803
Nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	99
Building	...	...	...	...	...	1,009
Drains	...	...	...	...	...	842
Sewerage	...	...	...	...	...	784
Water Supply	...	...	...	...	...	467
Water Samples	...	...	...	...	...	179
Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	12
Milk Sampling	...	...	...	...	...	84
Food	...	...	...	...	...	310
Food Shops	...	...	...	...	...	79
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	..	21
Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	...	25
Refuse	...	...	...	...	...	148
Workshops and Factories	...	...	...	...	...	8
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	...	9
Petroleum Regulations	...	...	...	...	...	9
Council Houses	...	...	...	...	...	1,761
Town and Country Planning	...	...	...	...	...	283
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	364

